

Message Text

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46

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 RSC-01

L-02 CIAE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00 DODE-00 EB-07 COME-00

MC-01 /064 W

----- 100151

R 181434Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2205

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 3007

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

BEIRUT FOR RCAA

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, MOPS, SY

SUBJECT: SYRIA: AIR FORCE COMMANDER'S REMARKS ON ISRAELI OVERFLIGHTS

1. DURING DEC 16 CALL ON SYRIAN AIR FORCE COMMANDER
NAJI JAMIL (ALSO HEAD OF SARG SPECIAL AIRCRAFT SELECTION
COMMITTEE) BY REGIONAL CIVIL AIR ATTACHE DWOR AND
ECONOFF TO DISCUSS COMMERCIAL AIRCRAFT SALES, SUBJECT
OF F-4-CAUSED SONIC BOOM THAT MORNING CAME UP. BASIC
PURPOSE OF CALL WAS TO PUSH FOR SYRIAN CIVILIAN PURCHASE
OF CESSNA CITATION 500 EXECUTIVE JET AND INVITE
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JAMIL FOR DEMO FLT ON THIS AIRCRAFT WHICH IN DAMASCUS

DECEMBER 15 TO 17. JAMIL APOLOGIZED FOR NOT BEING ABLE TO TAKE FLIGHT, AND WHEN WE LIGHTLY OFFERED TO MAKE A FLY-PASS NEAR HIS SECOND STORY OFFICE WINDOW, JAMIL LAUGHED AND SAID HE ALREADY HAD HAD THAT EARLIER IN THE MORNING. HE SAID TWO F-4'S AND FOUR ESCORT AIRCRAFT HAD TURNED A BIT FURTHER THAN USUAL INTO SYRIA AFTER PHOTO RECON RUN OVER LEBANON AND THIS WAS CAUSE FOR SONIC BOOM. CONTINUING IN LIGHT VEIN, HE COMMENTED SUCH RUNS OCCUR ABOUT EVERY TWO DAYS AND SYRIA QUITE USED TO THEM, ALTHOUGH THIS RUN MORE NOISY THAN USUAL. HE CONCLUDED BY CASUALLY ADDING THAT IAF HAS EIGHT F-4'S EQUIPPED FOR SUCH PHOTO RECON MISSIONS.

2. COMMENT: WE REPORT THIS GIVEN JAMIL'S VERY RELAXED MANNER AND LIFE-AS-USUAL APPROACH TO SUCH IAF FLIGHTS.

3. ANOTHER INTERESTING ASPECT OF JAMIL'S ACTIVITIES WAS THAT AS HEAD OF SPECIAL AIRCRAFT SELECTION COMMITTEE, HE WAS SENT BY SARG TO LONDON TO SIGN CONTRACT WITH BOEING FOR THREE 727'S AND TWO 747SP'S DEC 12, RATHER THAN SYRIAN ARAB AIRLINE'S CHAIRMAN AIR FORCE GENERAL ASAD MOKAYAD. A RELIABLE SYRIAN COMMERCIAL SOURCE TOLD ECONOFF THAT SARG HAD ARRANGED "SPECIAL MISSION" FOR MOKAYAD TO MOSCOW SOLELY TO MAKE HIM UNAVAILABLE DURING CONTRACT SIGNING IN LONDON WITH BOEING.
MCCORMICK

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NNN

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